

Emergency Response News



January 2003

IDEM responds to 7,000-gallon gasoline spill impacting residences and wastewater treatment plant in Russiaville, Howard County

The Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) joined local and state agencies to provide sampling and oversight during the cleanup of an approximately 7,000-gallon gasoline spill at a facility in Russiaville, Howard County.

On January 19, an IDEM On Scene Coordinator received a call from the Russiaville Voluntary Fire Department requesting assistance in the cleanup of a gasoline spill at a bulk distribution facility.

The On Scene Coordinator met with members of the fire department and State Fire Marshal's Office at the site. Staff found a minimal amount of petroleum product in the secondary containment.

IDEM staff discovered gasoline had migrated into the soil and into an old lateral sanitary sewer pipe at a former residence on the site. It was determined the lateral had been connected to the sanitary sewer main and the wastewater treatment plant. The wastewater treatment plant had to be temporarily shut down.

The On Scene Coordinator detected potentially explosive levels of vapors in the sewer line. Staff evacuated nearby residences and vented the first house on the sewer line. Firefighters monitored houses in the area. The sewer line was flushed with fire fighting foam to suppress the vapors. Residents were allowed to return to their homes once the vapors had dissipated.

Contractors were hired to recover the gasoline in the containment area, pump the remaining gasoline from a leaking above ground storage tank, and empty and dismantle other above ground storage tanks on the property. Additional activities included digging sumps to recover free product in the soil, constructing an interceptor trench to prevent fuel from entering the sewer or waters of the State, flushing and recovering product in the sewer line, and installing on-site recovery wells in the trenches.

On January 24, staff reopened the wastewater treatment plant when the sewer line was unplugged and no free product was detected.

The On Scene Coordinator continued to monitor the wastewater treatment plant's outfall for several days.

The site has been turned over to IDEM's State Cleanup Section for long-term monitoring.

Site Snapshot

IDEM Actions:

Investigated, assisted and oversaw emergency response cleanup actions of an approximately 7,000-gallon gasoline spill

Location:

Bulk petroleum distribution facility and nearby residences in Russiaville, Howard County

Primary Substance of Concern:

Petroleum product

Potential Environmental and Human Health

Threats:

Impact to waters of the State and potential explosion hazard

For more information about IDEM's emergency response actions at this site, contact staff at the following phone numbers or at IDEM's toll free phone number (800) 451-6027:

Greg Carter
On Scene Coordinator
Emergency Response Section
(317) 308-3036

Max Michael
Section Chief
Emergency Response Section
(317) 308-3049